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The Director of Central Intelligence  
Washington, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

NIC #00156-89  
27 February 1989

MEMORANDUM FOR: National Foreign Intelligence Board Principals

FROM: Fritz W. Ermarth  
Chairman, National Intelligence Council

SUBJECT: NIE 11-7/8-89: Soviet Aerodynamic Counterstealth and Stealth Capabilities ☐

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1. The attached coordinated draft of NIE 11-7/8-89: Soviet Aerodynamic Counterstealth and Stealth Capabilities is forwarded to you for consideration at the next NFIB meeting. ☐

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2. In addition to extensive coordination within the Intelligence Community, the draft has benefitted from the expertise of several outside referents. Any further suggestions for substantive changes or alternative language will be promptly forwarded to you through the NFIB Executive Secretariat. ☐

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Fritz W. Ermarth

Attachment  
As stated



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~~SECRET~~ ☐

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## NIO/S&amp;T INFORMATION SHEET

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Use of Outside Consultants

We used several outside experts on stealth technology, who reviewed drafts and provided comments that we made available to the principal drafter.

Characterization of the Coordination Meetings

Coordination meetings went smoothly, although major changes were made and , these required that the meetings spread over a several-month period. These changes expanded the text to the point that we split the paper in two. NFIB is considering a relatively short NIE per se. The more detailed analyses that support the NIE will be published concurrently in a Research Study. This detailed information is most useful to Department of Defense R&D and program managers. There are a number of footnotes, mostly of a detailed nature and hence not calling into question the conclusions of the Estimate. A discussion of denial, deception, and technology surprise, contained in a text box, has been included at the suggestion of then-DDCI Bob Gates.

Description of Significant Last Minute Changes

NONE

Recommendation for Standard or Limited Dissemination

Standard

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Recommendation For or Against Issuance of White Cover Key Judgments

Recommend White Cover Key Judgments

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DCI TALKING POINTS  
NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE 11-7/8-89  
SOVIET AERODYNAMIC COUNTERSTEALTH AND STEALTH CAPABILITIES

- o The Estimate was initiated by the NIO/S&T based on the high interest in the policymaking and R&D communities for intelligence on this important area.
- o It is needed to help US policymakers make decisions on the scope, pace, directions and funding of US stealth and counterstealth activities related to aircraft and cruise missiles.
- o The Estimate addresses two central questions: What are the Soviets' current and projected counterstealth capabilities against aircraft and cruise missiles? What are the Soviets' current and projected capabilities to develop and deploy stealth aircraft and cruise missiles of their own?
- o For counterstealth, the Estimate concludes that the Soviets' capabilities will remain inadequate [redacted] in the face of vigorous US stealth developments. For stealth, the Estimate judges that the Soviets may not at this time be achieving signature reduction results comparable to those of the United States.

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- o This Estimate was managed by ANIO/S&T, [redacted]. [redacted] will provide you with additional information.

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE DCI'S USE ONLY

- o The coordination meetings for this Estimate went smoothly, although there were major changes from earlier drafts [redacted]. The new and more detailed CIA analysis expanded the length of the paper greatly, to the point that we decided to split it in two. NFIB is considering a relatively short NIE per se. The more detailed analyses that support the NIE will be published concurrently in a Research Study. This detailed information is most useful to Department of Defense R&D and program managers. A discussion of denial, deception, and technology surprise, contained in a text box, has been included at the suggestion of then-DDCI Bob Gates.
- o The only major disagreement noted in the draft relates to the characterization of the Soviets' counterstealth response to US stealth developments. Most agencies expect the Soviets to continue their evolutionary approach. But DIA and NSA expect to see a vigorous development on the part of the Soviets to close the gap in capabilities. DIA and NSA do, however, note that whether or not the Soviets will be successful in closing this gap remains to be seen.
- o Given the budget crunch in the Defense Department and the new openness regarding the B-2 stealth bomber and the F-117A stealth fighter, interest in this paper will be very high in both the Executive Branch and the Congress. Supporters may view the judgments regarding the Soviet shortfalls as vindication of continued and aggressive US development of stealth technology. Critics, on the other hand, may view the same judgments as a rationale to slow down these very expensive programs. As always, then, the potential exists for our judgments to be abused as well as used.

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